Narrative Summary – December 2015

The average temperature for December 2015 was much warmer than normal, averaging 34.8°F, 3.7° above normal (31.1°F). The warmest December (1957) averaged 38.5°F, while the coldest (1985) averaged 21.0°F. The following temperature records were established during December 2015:

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                              New      Old
Date          Category       Record   Record      Year
  8        High Maximum        66       58         1989
  9        High Maximum        62       59         1987 (and other years)
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Precipitation for December 2015 totaled 2.04 inches, 159% of normal (1.20 inches). The wettest December (1996) received 3.69 inches. Snowfall for December totaled 7.0 inches, compared to a normal of 5.9 inches. The snowiest December on record (1996) received 22.6 inches.

The average wind speed for December 2015 was 7.1 miles per hour (mph), which was 1.2 mph above normal (5.9 mph). The windiest December on record (1968) averaged 8.3 mph, while the December with the lightest winds (1985) averaged 3.3 mph. The peak gust for December 2015 was 47 mph on December 9. The record peak gust for December is 74 mph in 2006.

Calendar year 2015 averaged 57.5°F, which is 3.6°F above normal (53.9°F). This makes 2015 the warmest year on record. This breaks the record for the warmest years (1992 and 1998) which averaged 56.4°F. The coolest year (1985) averaged 49.6°F. The hottest temperature during 2015 was 111°F on June 28. The coldest temperature was 11°F on January 1. Precipitation for 2015 totaled 6.48 inches, 86% of normal (7.08 inches). The wettest year (1995) received 12.31 inches, while the driest (1976) received 2.99 inches.

The monthly climatological data summaries, as well as other information, are available on the Internet. Address: http://www.hanford.gov/hms

HMS Office   373-2716

Note: The data in this summary pertains specifically to the Hanford Meteorology Station (HMS), which is located approximately 25 miles northwest of Richland, WA. No attempt should be made to infer meteorological conditions at other locations from these data.